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## HOUSE RESOLUTION

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URGING THE HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY TO COORDINATE WITH THE  
HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY TO CREATE A MORE WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT  
FOR CHINESE VISITORS.

1 WHEREAS, the tourism industry constitutes the largest  
2 single contributor to the State's gross domestic product,  
3 representing approximately 21 percent of its economy; and  
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5 WHEREAS, Hawaii's top four visitor markets have  
6 traditionally been the western United States, eastern United  
7 States, Japan, and Canada; and  
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9 WHEREAS, in terms of visitor days among the top four  
10 markets in 2013, the U.S. West and U.S. East showed flat growth,  
11 while Japan and Canada showed only modest gains; and  
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13 WHEREAS, in contrast, visitor days from Hawaii's Other Asia  
14 tourism market (excluding Japan but including China, Korea,  
15 Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore) increased by 16.5 percent; and  
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17 WHEREAS, it is important for the State to diversify its  
18 visitor markets so that weakness in a particular market at any  
19 given time can be offset by strength in another; and  
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21 WHEREAS, a particularly promising source of visitors for  
22 Hawaii is the Chinese market; and  
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24 WHEREAS, as the economy of China, already the world's  
25 second-largest economy, continues to grow, more members of that  
26 nation's emerging middle class will be able to afford to travel  
27 overseas; and  
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29 WHEREAS, in 2013, approximately 97,300,000 Chinese citizens  
30 traveled abroad, about 1,800,000 of whom visited the United  
31 States, and of these visitors, 125,011 arrived in Hawaii and



1 spent an average of \$394 per person per day, the highest among  
2 all visitor groups, including those from Japan; and

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4 WHEREAS, since November 1, 2012, residents of Taiwan have  
5 been able to travel to the United States under the Visa Waiver  
6 Program; and

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8 WHEREAS, on November 10, 2014, the governments of the  
9 United States and China announced that the two nations would  
10 begin granting visas valid for up to a decade to each other's  
11 citizens; and

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13 WHEREAS, nonstop air service from Asia to Hawaii has grown  
14 significantly recently, including re-established service from  
15 Taipei, new service from Beijing, and expanded service from  
16 Shanghai; and

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18 WHEREAS, although the absolute number of Chinese travelers  
19 to Hawaii is currently a fraction of the number of Japanese  
20 visitors to the State, the Chinese market is booming and poised  
21 to experience further growth while the Japanese market has  
22 plateaued and may decline; and

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24 WHEREAS, over the past few decades, the hospitality  
25 industry in Hawaii has gained valuable insights and experience  
26 regarding the preferences and expectations of Japanese travelers  
27 and has worked diligently to create a welcoming environment for  
28 them; and

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30 WHEREAS, as they have with Japanese visitors, it is  
31 crucially important that hotels, restaurants, stores,  
32 attractions, and other tourism-related businesses in Hawaii take  
33 measures to meet the unique needs and expectations of Chinese  
34 visitors; and

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36 WHEREAS, fostering a visitor environment that is welcoming  
37 to any cultural group requires a visitor industry work force  
38 that is well-versed in the language, culture, customs, and  
39 expectations of that culture; now, therefore,

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41 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the  
42 Twenty-eighth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular



1 Session of 2015, that the Hawaii Tourism Authority is urged to  
2 coordinate with trade organizations, including the Hawaii  
3 Lodging and Tourism Association, Hawaii Restaurant Association,  
4 Hawaii Visitors and Convention Bureau, Hawaii Transportation  
5 Association, and others in the hospitality industry, to create a  
6 more welcoming environment for Chinese visitors; and  
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8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all tourism-related businesses  
9 in Hawaii are urged to, among other things:

- 10  
11 (1) Hire additional Chinese-speaking staff;  
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13 (2) Provide training in Chinese culture to staff; and  
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15 (3) Make greater use of the Chinese language in signs and  
16 other written materials; and  
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18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Hawaii's congressional  
19 delegation is requested to take steps to realize amendments to  
20 the H-1B non-immigrant visa "specialty occupation" qualifying  
21 criteria to facilitate visa eligibility for foreign workers who  
22 have a high degree of specialized knowledge of reading, writing,  
23 and speaking at an honorific level to international visitors  
24 with an understanding and respect required in visitors'  
25 countries of origin to allow Hawaii's visitor industry to  
26 recruit and employ the necessary work force to realize these  
27 objectives; and  
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29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
30 Resolution be transmitted to the members of Hawaii's  
31 congressional delegation, the Governor, and the interim  
32 President and Chief Executive Officer of the Hawaii Tourism  
33 Authority.

